

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 SES-02 SMS-02 SAA-01 ACDA-12

HA-05 SS-15 SP-02 PM-05 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 DODE-00 L-03 AID-05 OMB-01

TRSE-00 /086 W

-----069928 030845Z /15

O 030740Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5567

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

USMTM RIYADH IMMEDIATE

CHUSMTM DHARHAN IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SANA 3812

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, YE, UR, US

SUBJECT: YAR RELATIONSHIP WITH SOVIET UNION

BEGIN SUMMARY: FIRST FRUIT OF MURRAY VISIT SEEMS TO
BE HARSH EXCHANGE BETWEEN SOVIETS AND YEMENIS.

YEMENIS REPORTEDLY REJECTED SOVIET OFFER OF NEW MILITARY
EQUIPMENT AND MAY HAVE LAID GROUNDWORK FOR REDUCTION
OF SOVIET PRESENCE IN YAR. END SUMMARY.

1. ALI MUSALLIM RETURNED TO YEMEN FROM KINGDOM TODAY,
2. AUGUST, FOR MEETING WITH YAR PRESIDENT ALI ABDALLAH
SALIH. MUSALLIM MET IN LATE AFTERNOON WITH CHARGE,
DATT, SECURITY ASSISTANCE SPECIALIST OF US EMBASSY.
SAUDI MILITARY ATTACHE SALIH HUAYAN ALSO ATTENDED.
MUSALLIM SAID YAR PRESIDENT DESCRIBED TO HIM MEETING
BETWEEN YEMEN CHIEF OF STAFF ALI SHAYBA AND SOVIET
AMBASSADOR DAY AFTER TALK OF PRESIDENT AND DEPUTY
ASSISTANT SECRETARY MURRAY, THAT IS 1 AUGUST.

2. PRESIDENT SALIH TOLD MUSALLIM HE REJECTED REQUEST BY

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SOVIET AMBASSADOR FOR PERSONAL MEETING AND DIRECTED
CHIEF OF STAFF ALI SHAYBA TO MEET WITH AMBASSADOR
INSTEAD. SHAYBA, WHO HAS GOOD RUSSIAN AFTER FIVE
YEARS OF TRAINING IN SOVIET UNION, REPORTEDLY HEARD OUT
SOVIET AMBASSADOR'S ACCUSATION THAT YEMENIS WERE
TREATING FRIENDS AS ENEMIES AND ENEMIES AS FRIENDS AND
ALLYING THEMSELVES WITH REACTIONARIES AND IMPERIALISTS

AGAINST SOVIET UNION AND REST OF YEMENI NATION.
SOVIET AMBASSADOR SAID HIS COUNTRY PREPARED SUPPLY
ALL MANNER OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT, IMMEDIATELY, AT NO
COST, WITH FULL TRAINING MISSION, AND NO STRINGS
ATTACHED.

3. SHAYBA REPLIED THAT SOVIETS HAD ALLIED THEMSELVES
WITH GROUP WHICH HAD COMMITTED AGGRESSION AGAINST
YAR AND NO AMOUNT OF AID WOULD PERSUADE YAR THAT
SOVIET LOYALTIES DID NOT LAY COMPLETELY WITH SOUTH.
YAR HAD, THEREFORE, DECIDED TO REJECT ALL OFFERS OF
SOVIET MILITARY AID. SHAYBA REPORTEDLY INFORMED
SOVIET AMBASSADOR THAT YAR LOOKED NOW TO WESTERN
COUNTRIES AND PARTICULARLY THE UNITED STATES FOR NEW
WEAPONS.

4. SHAYBA WENT ON TO SAY THAT YEMENIS KNEW OF LARGE
NEW MILITARY SHIPMENTS OF SOVIET UNION TO SOUTH
INCLUDING ARRIVAL IN LAST TWO OR THREE DAYS OF MIG-23'S.
HE SAID SOUTH WAS PLANNING WAR OF AGGRESSION AGAINST
NORTH AND SOVIETS OBVIOUSLY SUPPORTED IT COMPLETELY.
ONLY REASON HE COULD FIND FOR THEIR WISH TO REMAIN IN
NORTH YEMEN WAS TO ACT AS EXTENSION OF PDRY INTELLI-
GENCE AND POSSIBLY TO DISAFFECT CERTAIN OFFICERS OR
OTHER GROUPS IN YAR. SHAYBA REPORTEDLY SAID THAT
SOVIETS MAY NOT HAVE PARTICIPATED IN KILLING OF

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GHASHMI BUT THEY CERTAINLY "BLESSED IT" AND SAW IT AS
BENEFIT.

5. YEMENIS WOULD NOT BE INTIMIDATED BY THIS CONDUCT,
HOWEVER, AND CALLED ON SOVIETS, AS CONDITION OF
BETTER RELATIONS, TO HALT ALL MILITARY AID TO SOUTH AND
HELP BRING ABD AL-FATTAH ISMAIL AND OTHERS AROUND HIM
TO JUSTICE IN YAR.

6. MUSALLIM QUOTED ALI ABDALLAH SALIH AS SAYING THAT
SHAYBA WAS ASKED BY SOVIET AMBASSADOR WHAT UNITED
STATES WOULD DO. IMPORT OF QUESTION WAS THAT USG
WOULD DO NEXT TO NOTHING AND COULD NOT BE COUNTED UPON
TO SUPPORT YAR IN CRISIS. SHAYBA ALLEGEDLY REPLIED
THAT US DELEGATION HAD GIVEN YAR OFFER OF WEAPONS WITH-
OUT CONDITIONS AND WOULD WORK WITH YEMEN TO HELP
STRENGTHEN ITS ARMY.

COMMENT THERE IS NO REASON WHATSOEVER TO SUSPECT
THAT ALI MUSALLIM, WHO HAS PROVEN HONEST AND ACCURATE
REPORTED IN OTHER CONTACTS WITH EMBASSY, IS DISSEMBLING
ABOUT HIS CONVERSATION WITH ALI ABDALLAH SALIH. THIS

IS ALSO SECOND REPORT WE HAVE HAD OF ANGRY EXCHANGES
BETWEEN SOVIET AMBASSADOR AND RANKING YEMENI OFFICIALS,
FIRST PRESIDENT SALIH HIMSELF, AND NOW CHIEF OF STAFF
ALI SHAYBA. CONDITIONS PUT ON YEMENI-SOVIET FRIEND-
SHIP ARE CLEARLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR SOVIET UNION AND MAY
HAVE LAID BASIS FOR REDUCTION OF SOVIET PRESENCE BY
YEMENIS IF SOVIETS, THEMSELVES, DO NOT REACT UNILAT-
ERALLY BY WITHDRAWING THEIR SUPPORT IN SOME MEASURE.
WE WILL, OF COURSE, CONTINUE TO WATCH FOR SIGNS OF
SOVIET STANDDOWN. OUR CONCLUSION HERE IS THAT YEMENI
ACTIONS, WHILE NOT TAKEN IN RESPONSE TO AMERICAN DEMANDS,
NEVERTHELESS PUT PREMIUM ON SATISFACTORY AMERICAN REPLY
TO THEIR STRONGLY FELT REQUESTS FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE IN
SHORT RUN.

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